THE

BRAHMAVADIN

"एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति"

"That which exists is one: sages call it variously."

Rig-veda. I. 164–46.

VOL. XV.] MARCH, 1910. [No. 3.

LINGA WORSHIP.

(*Concluded from page 62.*)

19. The phallic idea in the Lingam is a later day western importation and has no existence in the national mind of the—Hindus. The westerner generally, with his rigid materialism unmindful of the serene beauty of the soul, with his religion not indigenous and incapable of fresh creation lacks an intuitive mind. He cannot enter into the soul of a people. Despising traditions other than his own he cannot descend easily into a new moral country. With his belief in the reality of the material world he cannot appreciate easily the significance of spiritual symbols. It is asserted by western scholars that there was a phallic worship in the primitive world.— Sonnerat says, "Linga is the figure representing the virile member of Atys the well-beloved of Cebele, and the Bacchus which they worshipped at Heleopolis. Egyptians, Greeks, Romans had temples dedicated to Priapus under

the same form as the Linga. The Israelites worshipped the same figure and erected statues to it. Asa, the son of Rehoboam prevented his mother from sacrificing to Priapus. The Jews got themselves initiated into the mysteries of Belphegor, a divinity like Linga whom the Meddianites worshipped on mount Phegor. Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord and built them high places and images and groves on every hill, and under every tree, and the object of worship was Baal and the pillar Lingam its symbol. It was on his altar they burned incense and sacrificed unto the calf (Kings). The calf (Nandi) is the Apis of the Egyptian Osiris. Baal whose votaries the Hebrews constantly became, worshipped the pillar and styled their God as Chuin, perhaps the Chivan or Siva of the Indian Trinity. (Bk. of Amos) Plutarch says that the Egyptian God Osiris was found everywhere with the Priapus exposed. Ptah-Sokari was also so represented and was called Ptah Sokari Osiri. In Phonecia the Canaan of the Scriptures, Linga worship was conducted in its wildest aspects. Lucian says, after the return of Bacchus, he placed two colossal phalli 300 fathoms high in the vestibule of the great Syrian temple. 9 (De Syria Dea). In the Bacchic sacrifice celebrated by Ptolomy of Alexandria a golden phallus 120 cubits high was erected by him. (Athenacius, Lib. V) Todd points out that even the Arabian Alhat is a Linga. The Buddhas of delight Hwan-hi-fu of Tibet is similar in the setting. Even to-day Durjayalinga of Darjeeling is worshipped by the Buddhists.

20. We believe that there was no phallic idea even in these relics of ancient civilisation in the West of India. The phallic idea is either a fiction or a misinterpretation of later times; perhaps of men averse to spiritual symbols. That a highly civilised race like the Greeks, the Romans, and the Hebrews could countenance such a worship cannot

be consistently believed in. Christian Greece and Rome and Mohommadan Egypt have become strangers to their own tradition. The continuity of religious life was lost in these peoples. Wherever sacrificial religion existed or the Vedic faith permeated, Yupa, Vedi, the Bull, etc. symbols of Yajna and forms of Agni must have been worshipped. If there was any real phallic worship in Western Asia then it must have been the result of the borrowing of an alien faith without realising its true import. The earliest religion of humanity as well as the latest is yajna or sacrifice. The Lord says in the Gita "Having created men along with sacrifice Prajapati said of yore multiply with the help of this, for, this is your wish yielding cow. " The Vedas are the basis as it were the only complete records of this religion of man. Hinduism with its Samhita, Brahmana and Upanishads, with its Srauta and its Smarta Sutras, its Itihasa and Puranas, its Tantras and Agamas, has preserved the continuity of national tradition in all its manifold Phases. Hence the religions of the world must be interpreted in the light of the Vedas. If viewed, in this light, the phallic worship of Western Asia in nothing other than the worship of Sun or Agni as Siva and its ensign Yupa. In the Rig Veda, the Yagnapurusha is very often Vishnu and the Yupa is a sun-pillar and sometimes it is Sivalinga.

21. Let us take some of the ancient phallic gods and try to understand their significance. Let us take the semetic Baal, the Assyrian Bel and the Sabian Bil. This Semétic word primarily means 'Lord' and is used in the sense of 'Lord or husband of men.' This is also the meaning of the Sanskrit word Prajapati or Brahma, a Vedic God. The biblical Baal is a generic name. It is applied to every God, even to Jehova. But latterly, it represented a particular deity even as the Yupa came to

represent solely a Sivalingam. Baal is perhaps derived from Bala, strength or lordly power or Hali. The bull and the Yupa are, in the Vedas, emblems of strength and prosperity. As in the case of the Vedic Yupa, the Baal of the Chaldian cosmogony is the shaper of Heaven and Earth and the Creator of the universe. Ball was represented on high places by a pillar and is sometimes called Baal Chammanam or Sun-pillar. It is believed that the symbols of Baal in their earliest form of the sacred tree or the sacred stone were not appropriated to any particular kind of worship but were the marks of any sanctuary or memorials of a place where the worshipper had found God, even as the Stamba of Hinduism which was also a Sun-pillar in the Vedas. We pointed out that the Yupa also is represented by the sacred trees such as Udumbara, Khadira, Bilva, and by sacred stones of variegated hues. His wife Ashera is translated in English as Grove. She represents sometimes the pillar or tree. Baal is the Lord of ashera. The Yupa is also termed in the Vedas Vanaspati or Lord of the forest. These pillars were also the primitive Altars, Yupa-Vedi. As the Linga has a double aspect as Siva the God of Bliss and Rudra the distroyer, so Moloch the destructive diety was also called baal. It was only laterly that the Phallic idea was superimposed on it. The writer in the Encyclopaedia Britanica from which we have noted the above facts, says, "The worship of Baal among the Hebrews has two distinct periods one before the time of Samuel, and a second from the introduction of the Tyrian worship of Baal by Ahab, who married a Phoenexian princess. The ritual of this new Baal was much more splendid than the older, canaanitish worship." The Hebrews in their wanderings carried with them the religious influences through many channels and nations. Hence we have an old Baal and a young Baal. Wherever there was

a tree worship or pillar worship it must have been the worship of Agni as Vanaspati. Such seems to be the origin of tree worship even in the Shimto temples of Japan. Atys maimed himself and became the fir tree a stump of which was loved by Cebele. Simillar explanations can be offered even in other cases. The word Phallus itself, says Todd, is from Phalisa, Lord of fructification. This is also the attribute of Agni-Prajapati, in the Vedas. Bacchus is traced from Bhagga-Isa, the God of wealth and prosperity in the Vedas. Priapus can be traced to Prajapati who in the Rig Veda resides by the side of rivers and is the source of agricultural prosperity ; he is the great fructifier and creator. Vulgar sceptics and irreligious scoffers might have identified Priapus with the virile member ; the Yupa with its top ring may convey the idea of Priapus exposed to a scoffer, but there is nothing absurd in the original itself. Osiris is derived from Iswara by Todd. Perhaps, Osiris is from the Sanskrit Asiras, the headless, the stump or Skambha is a name of Agni. Osiris was a new comer in the Egyptian pantheon and was laterly identified with the sun God Ra Sanskrit Ravi. Christianity is considered by some orientalists as an expression of the Vedic Fire myth. Christ is the Fire taken out of the Cross or churned out of the arani sticks placed in the form of an Indian Svastika. We find Linga-like symbols on the outer lintel which surrounds the Circis at Nesmes and in front of the ancient churches and cathedrals at Toulouse and Bourdeaux. If this hypothesis is justifiable the Cross, the sacred symbol of the Christians may be said to have the same origin as the other Babylonian and Assyrian symbols of its kind, and is but another expression of the original sacrificial emblems of the ancient Aryans or of the Sivalinga. Thus the pillar or Linga worship is another form of the worship of the sacrificial

Yupa-Vedi ; and the phallic idea in it is only a latter day superimposition of degenerate imagination. It has nothing whatever to do with the original symbol.

22. What has been said is this : All the religions of the ancient world--Egyptian, Assyrian, and even Semitic—are of sacrificial origin. They originated as symbols of Sun, fire, and such other sacrificial deities. Of the vestiges of ancient religious literature the Vedas alone have preserved in unbroken continuity the growth and development of the various rituals and philosophy pertaining to these gods. Rich in particulars they have furnished the foundation for all kinds of future possibilities. The true significance of the symbolic as well as the personal elements of every religion can, therefore, be better understood only with the aid of the Vedas and Vedic traditions. The Linga worship of the Indians has its origin, like every other religious worship of India, in the ancient Sun and Fire worship, of the Vedic Aryans. Linga symbolises the Yupavedi or the pillared altar which constituted the emblem of sacrifices. The same is seen to have been the origin of the ancient worships of Baal, Phallus, Bacchus, Priapus, Osiris, Moloch and such other gods. In India in the mantras and rituals used even this day in the worship of Linga there is nothing obscene or repugnant. They are all addressed to the Supreme Being with a view to secure to the votaries Supreme felicity of Moksha. The Vamacharic conceptions in similar worships outside India appeared to have been later importations into the sublime faith of the ancients by the exotic followers of the faith who sought to give religious colour to their vulgar social practices. Most of the Vamachara practices that might be found current in India to-day have nothing to do whatever with religion. These have been pronounced by competent authorities to have been introductions in

India from outside during the post-buddhistic era of Indian History. One of the attempts of religious reformers like Sankara, Ramanuja, Basava, and Chaitanya, who came in wake of Buddhism, was to preserve religious practices from all such corruptions by holding aloft the torch of religion in its prestine purity. Like the cross of Christians and the crescent of Mahomadans, Linga is therefore the sublime symbol of the Supreme Brahman, the emblem of the creative and destructive Siva who is the personification of Agni or the Fire of the sacrificer.

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NOTES OF SOME WANDERINGS WITH THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Continued from page 91.)

Persons :—The Swami Vivekananda ; gurubhais, and disciples.

A party of Europeans, amongst whom were Sthir Mata, the 'Steady Mother' ; 'One whose name was Joy' ; and Nivedita.

Place.—Kashmir.

Time.—June 20th to October 12th 1886.

Wednesday July 20th.

Next day, we came to the ruins of the two great temples of Avantipur. Each hour, as we went deeper and deeper into the interior, the river and the mountains grew more lovely. And amidst the immediate attractions of fields and trees, and people with whom we felt thoroughly at home, how difficult it was to remember that we were exploring a stream in Central Asia ! To those who have seen Kashmir in any season, a wealth of memory is called up, by Kalidas' picture of the spring-forest, in all its beauty of wild cherry-blossom, and almond and apple,—that forest, in which Siva sits beneath a dheodhar, when Uma, princess of the Himalaya, enters, with her offering of a lotus-seed garland, while close at hand stands the beautiful young god

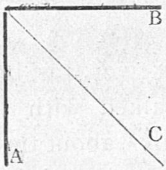
with his quiver and bow of flowers. All that is divine in an English spring, or lovely in the woods of Normandy, at Eastertide, is gathered up and multiplied, in the charms of the vale of Kashmir.

That morning, the river was broad and shallow and clear, and two of us walked with the Swâmi, across the fields and along the banks, about three miles. He began by talking of the sense of sin, how it was Egyptian, Semitic, and Aryan. It appears in the Vedas, but quickly passes out The Devil is recognised there, as the Lord of Anger. Then, with the Buddhists, he became Mara, the Lord of Lust, and one of the most loved of the Lord Buddha's titles was conqueror of Mara, *vide* the Sanskrit lexicon that Swâmi learnt to patter, as a child of four! But while Satan is the Hamlet of the Bible, in the Hindu scriptures, the Lord of Anger never divides creation. He always represents defilement, never duality.

Zoroaster was a reformer of some old religion. Even Ormuzd and Ahriman, with him, were not supreme: they were only manifestations of the Supreme. That older religion must have been Vedantic. So the Egyptians and Semites cling to the theory of sin, while the Aryans, as Indians and Greeks, quickly lose it. In India, righteousness and sin become *vidya* and *avidya*,—both to be transcended. Amongst the Aryans, Persians and Europeans become Semitised, by religious ideas, hence the sense of sin. [One of those who listened to this talk, had a wonderful opportunity, later, of appreciating the accuracy, as well as the breadth of the Swami's knowledge, when she saw two Parsis glad to sit at his feet, and learn from him the history of their own religious ideas.]

And then the talk drifted, as it was always so apt to do, to questions of the country and the future. What idea

must be urged on a people, to give them strength? The line of their own development runs in one way, A. Must the new accession of force be a compensating one, B? This would produce a development midway between the two, C, a geometrical alteration, merely. But it was not so. National life was a question of organic forces. We must re-inforce the current of that life itself, and leave it to do the rest. Buddha preached renunciation, and India heard. Yet within a thousand years, she had reached her highest point of national prosperity. The national life in India has renunciation as its source. Its highest ideals are service and *mukti.* The Hindu mother eats last. Marriage is not for individual happiness, but for the welfare of the nation and the caste. Certain individuals of the modern reform, having embarked on an experiment which could not solve the problem, "are the sacrifices, over which the race has to walk."



And then the trend of conversation changed again, and became all fun and merriment, jokes and stories. And as we laughed and listened, the boats came up, and talk was over for the day.

The whole of that afternoon and night, the Swâmi lay in his boat, ill. But next day, when we landed at the temple of Bijbehara—already thronged with Amarnath pilgrims—he was able to join us for a little while. "Quickly up and quickly down," as he said of himself, was always his charactesristic. After that, he was with us most of the day, and in the afternoon, we reached Islamabad.

The *dungas* were moored beside an apple-orchard. Grass grew down to the water's edge, and dotted over the lawn stood the apple and pear and even plum trees, that

a Hindu state used to think it necessary to plant, outside each village. In spring-time, it seemed to us, this spot must be that very Island-Valley of Avilion,

> "Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns,
> And bowery hollows, crowned with summer sea."

The houseboat, in which two of us lived, could not be taken so far, so it came to rest in a very deep and rapid portion of the stream, between high hedges, and how beautiful was the walk, from the one point to the other, under the avenue of poplars, with the wonderful green of young rice on either hand!

In the dusk that evening, one came into the little group amongst the apple trees, and found the Master engaged in the rarest of rare happenings, a personal talk with *Sthir Mata*, and her whose name was Joy. He had taken two pebbles into his hand, and was saying how, when he was well, his mind might direct itself to this and that, or his will might seem less firm, but let the least touch of pain or illness come, let him look death in the face for a while, and "I am as hard as that (knocking the stones together), for I *have* touched the feet of God." And one remembered, *apropos* of this coolness, the story of a walk across the fields, in England, where he and an Englishman and woman had been pursued by an angry bull. The Englishman frankly ran, and reached the other side of the stile in safety. The woman ran as far as she could, and then sank to the ground, incapable of further effort. Seeing this, and unable to aid her, the Swâmi,—thinking "So *this* is the end, after all!"—took up his stand in front of her, with folded arms. He told afterwards how his mind was occupied with a mathematical

calculation, as to how far the bull would be able to throw. But the animal suddenly stopped, a few paces off, and then, raising his head, retreated sullenly.

A like courage—though he himself was far from thinking of these incidents—had shown itself, in his early youth, when he quietly stepped up to a runaway horse, and caught it, in the streets of Calcutta, thus saving the life of a woman, who occupied the carriage behind.

The talk drifted on, as we sat on the grass beneath the trees, and became, for an hour or two, half grave, half gay. We heard much of the tricks the monkeys could play, in Brindaban. And we elicited stories of two separate occasions in his wandering life, when he had had clear previsions of help, which had been fulfilled. One of these I remember. It may possibly have occurred at the time when he was under the vow to ask for nothing, and he had been several days (perhaps five) without food. Suddenly, as he lay, almost dying of exhaustion, in a railway-station, it flashed into his mind that he must rise up, and go out along a certain road, and that there he would meet a man, bringing him help. He obeyed, and met one, carrying a tray of food. "Are you he to whom I was sent?" said this man, coming up to him, and looking at him closely.

Then a child was brought to us, with its hand badly cut, and the Swâmi applied an old wives' cure. He bathed the wound with water, and then laid on it, to stop the bleeding, the ashes of a piece of calico. The villagers were soothed and consoled, and our gossip was over for the evening!

(*To be continued.*)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION IN TRICHINOPOLY.

A STUDENT OF SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA.

About more than half a century ago a wave of scepticism and agnosticism began to deluge the world, and it looked as if religion was in danger of death and destruction. The mechanical view of the universe presented by Huxley and Tyndall, Darwin and Spencer caught the minds of men. Intellect, sharpened by Science and led by the senses, began to search the whole world of experience for the soul of man. The living temple was dissected; God was put into the test tube; and the new High Priests of modern Science with a zeal worthy of a better cause, imagined to have conclusively proved to themselves that belief in divine life was a pure myth—the result of a feverish imagination, the work of a cunning priestcraft and the inspiration of superstition. The loss of the soul became the malady of the day. The poetry, the chivalry and the romance of life all vanished before the rush and whirl, the bustle and turmoil of modern life. Verily the modern man has gained the whole world, but lost his own soul. But intellect alone cannot solve the problem of life. The best men in the West were not satisfied with this soulless, mechanical and automatic view of life. They found out that gold fever and the thirst for power made men more restless than ever. The passion for truth, the glorious heritage of modern science, seized their minds and possessed their souls. For a time they took refuge in art; then they turned to poetry, morality, and philosophy. But none of these could satisfy the irrepressible thirst of the soul.

2. While thus they were immersed in this dark and

overwhelming despair, a glorious vision dawned on them, the horizon was touched by the golden rays of the rising sun of Wisdom and shining ethereal forms emerged out of the golden orb. They wept for very joy and were filled with rapture. These shining forms were the children of the Lord who always surround Him and come before and after Him when He incarnates, ever ready to help those that thirst for God.

3. Meanwhlile let us see what is the state of India. Subject to centuries of slavery, her children have forgotten their glorious heritage and are now sunk in the lowest depths of formalism and superstition. Sâtvika peace has degenerated into Tamasika dulness and ceremonials have taken the place of spiritual earnestness. Commercialism, the spirit of the age, has invaded every sacred tie of Hindu life, and undermined the religious basis of our civilization. The Vaidikas cling to the dry bones of religion with the zeal of fanatics. The educated classes are sceptic and hypocritical. They see no meaning in the absurd superstition of the country and yet they must perform the ceremonies being in society. The Brâhmana, once the pride of India, is now hurling down headlong into materialism with all the keen intelligence of his race. Caste based upon spiritual qualification has degenerated into a social tyranny, most appalling to behold. At best the educated man has only intellectual conviction about religion which scarcely filters down to the heart, through which alone religion can be realized. We are so much accustomed to the denunciation of our present degraded conditions that I do not want to insert one more probe into the wound.

4. The historical view is often misleading. In our generalisations of the condition of modern India we are apt to take a very pessimistic view of life and consider

that India has hopelessly degenerated without any redeeming feature. But India is now as young and beautiful as ever. Her capacity for producing sages is infinite and those who have eyes to see may still meet sages in every part of this Punya Bhumi. Critics, patriots and Philanthropists think that India needs to be revived by *them* and forget that ours is a sage-made civilization as old as creation.

5. But this does not contradict the general view that there are ups and downs in the history of nations as of individuals. At any rate, there is no doubt of the present degenerate condition of the educated Hindus. Fascinated by the glamour of western civilization they are ashamed of their motherland and eagerly ape the vices and not the virtues, of the west, while the West with its passion for truth is proceeding at an electric rate towards the goal of humanity. We are yet standing in idolatrous admiration of Huxley and Spencer imitating all the vices of a godless, âsurica civilisation and are hastening towards corruption and death. A few men, however, were not satisfied with this mad craving of the senses and tried to rekindle the fire once more. Many Samâjams like the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj and reform movements were started, but time has proved that these do not touch the real chords of our civilization. The earnest seekers after truth were now immersed in gloom and despair. Once again in the history of spiritual civilization the prayer went forth from Mother Earth for the destruction of materialistic civilization and the preservation of Dharma.

6. While the East and the West were thus pining for a Redeemer, there appeared in the little village of Kamarpukur in Bengal a young man with a strange appearance consumed by divine love and wisdom. The story of this God-man is now the common property of all. But

we may read it a thousand times and yet the charms of this beautiful life possess us more and more. We who had not the privilege to sit at his feet have only to look at the picture. Ah ! how telling is the childlike simplicity of the face ! His eyes are really turned inward and bear eloquent testimony to the soul lost in God-consciousness. Who could describe the limitless ocean of *Satchidananda* in which he was for ever and ever immersed and from which he had to be brought back to the senses ? Was his mind a waveless ocean bathed in light and effulgence—a veritable *Kshirâbdhi* (க்ஷீராப்தி) for the abode of God ? Was it all light—light effulgent that lights the Sun, the Moon, the lightnings and the Stars ? Was it filled with ever expanding love and bliss and grace ?

7. His coming indicates a high watermark in the tide of civilization. The whole universe is filled with joy aud rapture at the birth of a great Saviour. When a man becomes a sage he raises the whole world along with him for all life is essentially one and the same. Truly does Swami Vivekananda say.

"Even the Buddha and the Christ, are but second "rate men ; the greatest men of the world have passed "away unknown. The highest men are calm, silent and "unknown. They are sure that, even if they go into a "cave and close up the door, simply think five thoughts "and pass away, these five thoughts will live through "eternity. They will penetrate through mountains and "cross oceans and travel through the world and will enter "into some brain and raise up some man who will give "expression to these five thoughts." Thus this great sage, a God among men, spread a charm wherever he was. Many sat spell bound to hear him. And to-day he is worshipped as an Avatâra by many all over the world. Such is the silent power of godliness.

8. Modern Commercialism by her facilities of communication has annihilated distance and brought together all the nations of the world on the common platform of strife and competition. The complexities of modern life were never dreamt of in the past. Clashing interests and conflicting ideals have been irresistibly brought together. Can we not say that India with its diversified races and creeds, interests and ideals will be the battle ground of the world to bring about the victory of Truth over Falsehood? Nowhere else in the world can there be so much diversity—diversity of caste, creed, colour, nationality, interests, ideals etc. India is really a microcosm, a miniature universe. The solution of *her* problem is the solution of the problem of the world. Whether we like it or not, we are no longer to remain in isolation. We are confronted by conflicts everywhere. We have to tolerate them whether we will or no. Toleration leads to assimilation and assimilation to unification. Thus unity in diversity—the plan of creation as Swami Vivekananda said—is to be realised only in India. It is her precious privilege, her innate right. But though the principle is not new to us, we find the application to be difficult. The contradictions of modern life are so amazing that we often despair of finding a mean between the possible and the impossible. But it was reserved to Bhagvan Sri Ramakrishna Deva to reconcile the irreconcilables and make a universal application of the principle. In him met all clashing interests and conflicting ideals and found their reconciliation. He was the fulfilment of every creed, religion and philosophy, Orthodoxy and heterodoxy, the Brahmin and the Pariah, the Indian and the Westerner, he was all this and more. A better Christian or Muhammadan or Buddhist could not be imagined. The name of Allah or Jehova melted his mind as much as that of Sri

Rama or Krishna. Even the conflicting mârgas claim him as their own. His was the privilege, we may say unique in the history of religious aspiration, of sucking the honey from every flower of religion and philosophy. He summed up in the short span of his earthly sojourn the history of the whole human race in all its varieties and perfected it by the realization of God consciousness.

9. "The sage sits in a cave and thinks five thoughts. "These will penetrate through mountains and cross oceans "and travel through the world and will raise up some man "who will give expression to these five thoughts." Yes. Who can be a better example for this statement than Swami Vivekananda himself? Swami Vivekananda was early marked for his mission. With a towering intellect and an inspiring personality this apostle of Universal Religion actually did cross oceans and travel throughout the world carrying with him the torch-light of truth—the message of his Master. He has done more for India and the world than any one man during the last century. To-day his ideals are the ideals of thousands of educated men all over the world. We are met here to-day to do homage to the mighty sage and his world-moving disciple. By doing so, we really pay homage to all that is noblest and best in the traditions of our religion.

10. The prophetic eye of the Swami seized the fact that India had a mission in the world, the mission of spiritualizing modern civilization. He knew well that religious revival precedes and sanctifies all other reforms, social, political and material. The weary world is now being brought back to the fountain again. Western civilization has already reached a dead-lock and looks to India for inspiration once more. All glory to Swami Vivekananda as he was the first to hearken to this call. To regenerate the world, India has to be regenerated.

Swami Vivekananda and his co-disciples have themselves set the example.

The young band of sanyasins gathered together by the Swami, inspired by their master's life and burning with religious patriotism, formed themselves into a mission for the guidance of struggling humanity. The apostles of Jesus and the disciples of Buddha were not more triumphant in their mission. The sublimity of their ideal and the purity of their lives draw forth the admiration of all.

11. His Holiness Swami Ramakrishnananda, with a living love for God and his Guru—all his own—has been in our midst for more than ten years. His saintly character and silent work are familiar to you all. Hundreds of educated men have sat at his feet and drunk deep of the fount of wisdom and love. I and many young men like myself, immersed in materialism and grovelling in darkness have derived consolation by coming under his paternal care. The many branches in Southern India and the more silent but lasting influence he has effected in the minds of men bear ample testimony to his work. But Ramakrishnananda the man, the saint, is no less great than Ramakrishnananda the preacher. You have only to watch his life for a week and a new flood of light, such as we rarely experience in these days, is sure to course through your veins, and life will verily assume a deeper meaning. Madras is thus peculiarly fortunate in having amidst it this dispenser of devotion and love.

12. The branch at Trichinopoly, which is to be ushered into existence shortly, coming under the holy influence of such a great personality is destined, I am sure, to carry the torch light of true religion to every nook and corner of the district, and bring peace and solace to the struggling souls that are misguided by hostile influences. There can be no place more fitted in southern India for

the manifestations of the activities of the mission than Trichinopoly, with its numerous institutions for the training of youths, with its votaries of other religionists ready to draw away young minds from the faith of their birth, and above all with the Holiest of the Holy Shrines in India ever reminding man of the temple within himself. May Sri Ranganatha, the ever merciful and ever gracious Lord, vouch unto us strength and devotion to carry out the noble work.

BHAGAVAD GITA—AN ESSAY.

(*Continued from page 86.*)

VII

The Lord says,

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधानिष्ठा पुराप्रोक्तामयानघ ।

ज्ञानयोगेनसांख्यानां कर्मयोगेनयोगिनाम् ॥

"In this world, there is a twofold path, as I before said, O sinless one, that of Gnâna Yôga of the Sânkhyas and that of Karma Yôga of the Yôgis."

Each leads to the goal quite independently of the other. But--be it remembered—Gnâna Yôga *directly* leads to the goal, while Karma Yôga only *indirectly*. That is to say, Karma Yôga, leads to Gnâna Yoga, while the latter leads to the goal without any extraneous help. That Karma Yôga is a stepping stone to Gnâna Yôga is borne out by the following passage of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad:

"The Brahmanas seek to know this (self) by the study of the Vedas, by Yajna or worship," as well as by the following verses of the Gita.

संन्यासस्तुमहाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः ।

"Without Yôga, O mighty-armed, renunciation is hard to attain"

यज्ञोदानंतपश्चैव पावनानिमनीषिणाम् ॥

"Sacrifice, gift, austerity are the purifiers of the wise."

Thus, it is clear that Sânkhya or Gnâna Yoga is next to impossible without its preliminary Karma Yôga. So the Lord says;

नकर्मणामनारंभा न्नैष्कर्म्यंपुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
नचसंन्यासनादेव सिद्धिंसमधिगच्छति ॥

"None can attain the actionless (*i.e.* Gnâna) state by abstaining from action: nor by mere renunciation of activity doth he rise to perfection."

In this connection Srî Sankarâcharya opines that the above verse applies only to the ignorant, not to the wise. For the latter, being unshaken by the *gunas*, can go straight up to the goal of Gnâna Yôga; while the former, shaken very much by the *gunas*, must resort to Karma Yôga. Indeed the ignorant *cannot but do so*. For, says the Lord,

नहिकश्चित्क्षणमपि जातुतिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यतेह्यवशःकर्म सर्वंऽप्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥

"None can, even for an instant, remain actionless," for *helplessly is every one driven to action* by the *gunas* born of of nature?

Evidently, it is "every one" of the *ignorant not* of the *wise*, that is "helplessly driven to action." Since, then the ignorant *have* to engage in Karma Yôga, the Lord proceeds to draw their special attention to the right, as well as to the wrong, way of such engagement.

First, wrong way.

कर्मेन्द्रियाणिसंयम्यय आस्तेमनसास्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारःसउच्यते ॥

"Who controlling the organs of action, sitteth dwelling in his mind on the objects of the senses, that bewildered man is called a hypocrite." This is proceeding to practise Karma Yôga *with attachment*. So it is a wrong way.
Secondly Right Way.

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणिमनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।
कर्मेंद्रियैःकर्मयोगमसक्तःसविशिष्यते ॥

"Who, controlling the senses by Manas, O Arjuna, engages in Karma Yôga, *unattached*, with the organs of action he is worthy." Here the Karma Yôga is without attachment. So it is a right way.

Now, taking for granted that the bulk of the denizens of this world are ignorant and having said that such ignorant people have to practice first Karma Yôga and then Gnâna Yôga, the Lord proceeds to enumerate certain reasons as to why Karma Yôga is to be practised even in preference to Gnâna Yôga.

M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, B.A., L.T.

To be continued.

Harih Om!

S'ri Lakshmi Nrisimha Parabrahmane namah.

THE INDIAN ASCETICISM.

By S. N. NARAHARAYYA.

(*Concluded from page 45.*)

Section XIII.

Classification of Sannyasins.

Lastly it remains to notice the various classes of sannyasins known by the technical names. There is, perhaps, an unending controversy as regards this subject, but still we shall try to give some idea of these classes we have understood them.

Ekadandin.

In the first place there are *Ekadandins* and *Tridandins*: He who has abandoned all sorts of desires, whose mind is centred in That Highest without a second, and who wears that *danda* or staff of *jñāna*, or wisdom, is called an *Ekādandin* (possessor of one *danda* of *jñāna*.) He shall have these seven things: Taciturnity, Yogasanas, (various sitting postures while practising yoga), Yoga itself, endurance, love of solitude, non-desire, and equality among all beings in the entire cosmos.

Tridandin.

There are three things called *Vāgdanda* (*Vak* = speech), Manodanda (*Manas* = mind,) and Karmadanda (*Karma* = action), and he by whom these Dandas are "regulated" is called a Tridandin. That is to say, he in whom that triple subjection of, thought, word, and deed is found is, called a Tridandin. The same idea is contained in,

" वाग्दण्डःकर्मदण्डश्च मनो दण्डश्च ते त्रयः ।
यस्यैते नियता दण्डास्स त्रिदण्डी महायतिः ॥" N. P. U. Upa. 6.

But nowadays there are a class of sannyasins who wear one *danda*, in which three separate ones are tied together (so as to look one), and they go by that name.

I. Classification according to the merit.

We shall next see how Sannyasins may be divided according to the merit: There are four classes, (i) Vairagya Sannyasins; (ii) Jñāna Sannyasins; (iii) Jñāna-Vairagya Sannyasins; and (iv) Karma Sannyasins. The very names speak for themselves but a brief description may not still be useless.

i. Vairagya Sannyasins.

It has been noticed more than once that Vairagya is essential for the embracing of Sannyasa and how that alone is the best qualification. It was also noted above, there are some people, who, at a very early age, get that idea of renunciation. Especially, when their Samskāra is good, the very reading of Vedanta makes them hate all the pleasures of the senses, and they are specially fit for the life of asceticism. They are ever trying, consciously or otherwise to render themselves free from that veil of Māya. The first light that comes from outside—also a natural occurrence commensurate with the past Samskāra—is necessary and sufficient to light their path. Those who renounce life in that state of Vairagya are called Vairagya Sannyasins, and they are the Sannyasins of the highest merit.

ii. Jnana Sannyasins.

Next come Jñāna Sannyasins: By vocatious reading of Śastras and by the attendant meditating upon the highest Knowledge, some people get a sort of that real Jñāna, or knowledge. They can conceive what the highest is, and even as an intelligent student of physiology can conceive within

himself what the entire structure and functions of various parts of the body from top to toe are, even though he has never seen a body dissected, they can conceive what the world is, what man is, what Atman is, and, in fact, what it is that one should know. They thus, in time, become experienced in the ways of the world and gradually their mind turns dead to them all. They then forget all the fancies of the flesh, grow beyond this deed or that prescribed by the Śastras to the people of the world, and even forget all the attachment they have to the world,—

"देहवासनां शास्त्रवासनां लोकवासनां त्यक्त्वा"

Even if one dishonours them, they feel as glad as if they were highly honoured, and detest all *pravritti* that is associated with the world. To them *Sadhanachatushtaya*, will ever be ready within themselves, and they embrace Sannyasa, and are known as Jñāna Sannyasins.

iii. Jnana-Vairagya Sannyasins

Third in order of merit are Jñāna-Vairagya Sannyasins: They begin to study everything step by step, and also enjoy the pleasures of the world. Being soon satiated, they begin to feel that the so-called pleasures of the world are after all very trivial and are quite meaningless. What is our passionate love, our revengeful anger, our luxurious enjoyment, etc.? They have this body, no doubt, but are quite naked, as it were, from the various worldly garbs. At the same time they may embrace Sannyasa too, and such persons are called Jñāna-Vairagya Sannyasins.

iv. Karma Sannyasins.

Lastly, there come what are called Karma Sannyains. It is not necessary that they should be propelled by Vairagya, Jñāna, or both. They pass from one Aśrama to another and as a sort of "purification", embrace Sannyasa too at

the fourth part of their life. They are known as Karma Sannyasins.

The other classification is according to the order to which they belong. There are six orders, and beginning with the lowest one, let us proceed to the highest, giving the names in order, defining their nature, and also giving side by side the various restraints and limitations (Niyamas) that are attached to their actions.

II. Classification according to the order to which they belong.

First, there is that Kutichaka : At first we way mistake him not to be a Sannyasin at all, for generally our idea is that a Sannyasin has neither Śikhā nor Yajñopavita; but a Kutichaka is allowed to wear both. He wears a Tridanda, and has his Kaupina, Śāthi, etc., and is also allowed to worship his father and mother—that is to say those from whom his body has resulted—and preceptor. He is also,

i. Kutichaka.

"पिठरखानिशिक्यादिसाधनपरः ।"

as the Upanishads say. Gautama, Bharadwaja, Yājña-valkya, and Vasishta are said to have belonged to this class. A Kutichaka shall seek moksha in the path of Yoga.

He shall bathe thrice a day, and mark his forehead perpendicularly. He has to get his head shaved once in a couple of months, and Ekanna—or the eating of the food given by one alone—and a *pair* of Śathi- are recommended to him. He may worship images, and is also allowed to repeat Mantras in the form of *Japa*. His *pranava* is called *manasapranava*, and he has to study, but is not allowed to give Upadeśas to others.

His Niyama.

The next and a little more elevated is Bahudaka He too wears Śikha, Kantha, etc., and resembles Kutichaka in many respects.

ii. Bahudaka.

He has to bathe twice a day, and mark his forehead with three stripes. The time between one shaving and the other is two Ṛitus or four months,—twice the time prescribed for Kutichaka,—and his dress shall consist of a single *Ṡāthi*. Just like Kutichaka, he is allowed to worship too and repeat Mantras to perform what is known as *Japa*. He shall live by *Madhukarabhiksha* alone, and has to study several things. His Pranava is the same as that of Kutichaka, and like him he is not also allowed to impart Upadeśa to others.

His Niyama.

Next comes the Āśrama known as Hamsa, which has something to do with *tapas*. A Hamsa may allow *jatā* to grow, must mark his forehead with three perpendicular stripes; he cannot stay more than one night in a village, five in a town, seven in a pilgrimage, and in no case, more than the number of prescribed days. He must eat a little of cow-dung and drink a little of cow-urine every day, and besides observe Chāndrayāna.

iii. Hamsa.

A Hamsa shall bathe only once a day. If he is in the habit of getting himself shaved, he shall get shaved only once in four months, and shall live by *Mādhūkarabhikshā* using only his hands to receive alms. He has only one piece of cloth, has no worshipping of any deity, and all his worship consists in worshipping from the mind alone. He has to contemplate upon That Supreme Soul, his Pranava is called Antarapranava, and he shall not give Upadeśa to another.

His Niyama.

Fourthly comes Paramahamsa. This is a higher order still, and he has to remove all his hair, his Yajñopavita, etc. Upanishads make Vishnu say, "He gets the benefit of doing all the Karmas; he is Brahmana; he is well centred in the Brahman; he is the Rishi; he is Tapasvin; he is the best;

iv. Parama hamsa

he is the best of all ; he is the highest in the world ; and he is myself alone".

Says Manu,

"अद्भिर्गात्राणि शुद्ध्यन्ति मनस्सत्येन शुद्ध्यति ।"

—Ch. V. 109.

"Bodies are purified by water, and the mind by truth.", and he also says.

"क्षांत्या शुद्ध्यन्ति विद्वांसः ।"—Ch. V. 107.

"To the wise, the purity is effected by patience (itself)". On this principle, these Paramahamsas' baths are called *Manasikasnana*, or mental bathing, but they have to besmear their body with white ash. Let it be noted that according to Śastras,—well founded on principles we might have understood or have yet to understand,—bathing is of various kinds. (i). *Avagahana*, or immersing ; (ii). *Agneya*, or besmearing of the body with white ashes ; (iii). *Brahma*, sprinkling the person with water while the Mantra "Apohishtha etc." is being repeated ; and (iv). *Vayavya*, or to expose one's self to the flying dust when the cows walk. This besmearing of the body itself with white ash serves the purpose of a bath with better effects. He has no shaving, or if he wants to get himself shaved, it must be once in six months. He has to beg in the Madhukara way and has no clothes, and if he wants to have anything at all he is limited to a Kaupina. He has to worship only from the mind, he has to meditate, his Pranava is called *Antarapranava*, and he can give Upadeśa to others.

Hamsa and Paramahamsa may use a deerskin. but no other class.

Fifthly comes the Turiyatita. This is a stage which, as the very name implies, is past the fourth or the Parama-

v. Turiyatita.

hamsa stage. One belonging to this order must dwell in caves or holes, living on fruits. He has no clothes and must regard his body as a corpse.

He has to have only that Agneya kind of bathing, but is asked to mark his forehead. He is thoroughly naked must ever regard himself as That, he can give Upadeśa to others, and deep meditation must ever be his practice.

His Niyama.

Next comes Avadhutha or the last order. "This order", say the Upanishads, "is very rare in the world, but never very frequent. If ever one is found, he alone is ever pure, he alone is the embodiment of Mukti through Vairagya, he alone is the knowledge in that shape, he alone is the Purusha extolled in the Vedas, so do Jñānins regard him". "That high personage who concentrates in Me his mind, in him I too am centred," says Bhagavan Narayana. He has to pass through all the orders beginning with Kutichaka, and in the end he has to give up everything. In fine he has to abandon both tne Vedic and the wordly ways, should regard his body as a corpse, and must be wandering ever and everywhere. Though he has the highest intellect, yet he shall look as if he were stark mad, or a ghost itself. He shall never speak, shall ever be alone, shall be free from all dualism, and shall ever be thinking of That Self alone.

vi. Avadhuta.

He has to bathe in the Vayavya fashion, and has not to besmear his body even with white ashes. He has no shaving, no clothes, should ever think himself as That Itself, and ever have that deep meditation. His food is to swallow something, fruit leaf, or the kind of the forest productions, just as an

His Niyama.

ajagara serpent swallows. He may give the Upadeśa of Mahavakya to others.

En pasant we have to understand how the people of the world are to behave themselves in the presence of a Sannyasin. Be it noted that if he is humility itself incarnate people shall not take advantage of it. They must revere him, for the rule is.

विद्याकर्मवयोबन्धुर्वित्तैर्मान्या यथाक्रमम् ।
एतैः प्रभूतैः शूद्रोऽपिवार्धके मानमर्हति ॥

(Yajnavalkya A—116)

That is to say, learning, occupation, age, relation and wealth are to be respected in the above order. Though a Sudra, he in whom these excel, shall, in the old age, deserve respect. We need not again discuss the superiority of a Sannyasin, over the rest of the world in at last the first and the second points, and as such he is entitled to the respect by the worldly people.

This closes the topic Sannyasa, and two more things Tapas and Yoga will be taken up shortly, under the same title.

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

LIFE & TEACHINGS OF "SRI RĀMĀNUJĀCHĀRYA"

(Concluded from page 79.)

15. *The ideal of a Vaishnava.* The ideal to which a Vaishnava follower of Ramanuja is expected to reach is beautifully illustrated in the sacred writings. Once it happened that a Vaishnava devotee wished to know how he should conduct himself, and he approached his revered teacher for instruction in the matter. He referred him to Saint Anandalwar of Tirupati Hill for advice, to which he proceeded. This model teacher thereupon desired him stay with him for sometime. One day while meals were to being served after worship to all, he was asked to take his place in a corner at a spot far below his rank to which he would be entitled by virtue of his learning and social status; but he never got offended at the arrangement; and he immediately sat at the place allotted to him. The next occasion he was pointed out a seat in the front ranks of Vaishnavas at the time of serving meals. He was in no way elated with joy at this procedure. Everyday he used to bathe, and have his clothes well cleaned, and kept neat and white; and in his conduct he was exemplary, being the same in thought, word, and deed. After noticing his behaviour for sometime, the teacher at Tirupati exclaimed in terse Tamil thus "Kokkuppôl irukkam; Kôḷipôl irukkam, uppuppôl irukkam, ụmmaippôl irukkam"=கொக்குப்போலிருக்கும்; கோழிபோலிருக்கும்; உப்புப் போலிருக்கும்; உம்மைப்போலிருக்கும். "A Vaishnava will be like a swan (in his dress and neatness), he will be like a

fowl (in picking up the valuable substance from amidst a heap of rubbish); he will be like salt (being of the same quality, externally or internally); and he will be like yourself." With these remarks, he wished him God-speed. He brought this news to his own teacher; and great was the joy of all in the assembly, when they heard of this beautiful illustration. How much do we fall far short of this standard of a Vaishnava! How altruistic, sympathetic, noble, and exemplary is the ideal! It is hoped that we shall, hereafter at least, regulate our lives so as to approach this ideal. It is clear from the given illustration that a genuine Vaishnava should be a living example for purity of conduct, and should be a mirror of greatness, nobilily of character, like a swan. The comparison of a FOWL in relation to his daily life is intended to illustrate his attitude towards the Shastras and standard works of authority amidst the vast store of religious Literature. He is expected to use his best discrimination to select the essentials from the non-essentials like the FOWL, which is wont to take out the SUBSTANCE from amidst a heap of RUBBISH. The illustration that he should act the part of 'salt' in his dealings with the world, indicates his genuineness of character in relation to the external world, as well as to the internal, with a view to show that what was aimed at as the ideal was NO IMAGINARY BEING, but that living examples could be had in those days. The teacher points out to him that the person addressed was himself one of such examples, though rare to find.

Any how, with such noble examples before us for our guidance, we should not despair. This being a period of transition, we have occasions to notice many an instance of deviations from the righteous course, many a course of conduct undeserving of the former social dignity and status of the delinquents.

16 The need of the hour.

As a measure of practical reform along the line of least resistance, I would strongly advocate the entire union of the two important sections of Sri Vaishnava Brahmins which is partially carried out, and would earnestly appeal to them to sink their minor differences, and really follow the footsteps of Ramanujacharya, and approach the ideal already referred to. To the thoughtful and unbiassed Vaishnava follower of Saint Ramanuja, I would appeal for his consideration, and ask him to ponder over these so called differences. In his learned Introduction to the Mysore Census Report of 1891, Mr. V. N. Narasimhaiengar incidentally refers to these eighteen differences between the Vadakalai and Tenkalai section of Sri Vaishnavas. They are mostly philosophical, and two or three of them appear to be very puerile, and based upon mere sentiment.* With a spirit of broad-minded and sympathetic toleration with which our educated classes ought to be credited, (else our boasted education on western lines is not worth much), we should not despair of effecting a compromise, and work as a united band in common brotherhood as Ramanuja's true followers, who are expected to be alike in word, thought, and deed LIKE COMMON SALT. To carry out this desirable reform, let Aryan Lodges be established in different centres with the main object of effecting this compromise, so that all Ramanuja's followers may stand upon a common platform, and work out our salvation. To these institutions, Hostel arrangements can be attached, where the rising generation of Vaishnava students may be taken care of with regard to their spiritual advancement.

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* *These differences are noted below for easy reference.*

The differences referred to are:—

(1) Whether Laxmi, the consort of Vishnu, is, co-omnipresent and coillimitable with Vishnu.

(2) Whether Laksmi is only the mediatrix or the co-bestower of "Moksham" or final beatitude.

(3) Whether there is any graduated Moksham attainable by the good and blessed according to their respective multifarious merits.

(4) Whether PRAPATTI, or unconditional surrender of the soul to God, should be performed once for all.

(5) Whether it (Prapatti) is open to all, or is prescribed only for those, specially prepared and apprenticed.

(6) Whether the indivisibly atomic human soul is entered into or permeated or not by the Omnipresent Creator.

(7) Whether God's mercy is exerted with or without cause.

(8) Whether the same (Divine mercy) means the overlooking (doshādarsanam), or the enjoyment (dosha-bhogyatvam) of the soul's delinquencies.

(9) Whether works (karma) and knowledge (gnâna) are in themselves Salvation-giving, or only lead to faith (Bhakti), by which final emancipation is attained.

(10) Whether the good of other (unregenerate) castes should be tolerated according to their graduated social statuses, or should be venerated without reference to caste inequalities.

(11) Whether Karma (works, ritual) should or not be bodily and wholly abandoned by those who have adopted PRAPATTI.

Besides these, there are minor differences regarding (1) Performance of "Srāddha" on "Ekadasi" day, or the next day (2) The bell should be rung with the left hand, or it should be done away with, during worship, (3) whether Hastôdakam (purifying the hand with water after "Prāṇāyamam") should, or should not be resorted to).

17. In conclusion, Ladies and gentlemen, I beg to thank you for the kind patience with which you listened to my poor performance, for I am fully conscious of my inability to do justice to the great "Hero" of to-day's address. I am glad to find that signs are not wanting which indicated that several native scholars, imbued with Western scholarship and with an eye for historical research, will soon come into the field to explore the unknown regions of Visistadvaitic school of thought, and give the benefit of their researches to the world.

18. I am particularly glad to congratulate Mr. Gopalacharlu on the success that has attended his efforts to open a "Ladies" section for the delivery of lectures in Kanarese, in connection with the Srinivasa Mandiram Library; and may there be many more occasions of such gatherings, as years roll on, in commemoration of Birthday festivities, anniversaries of our noble sage Sri Bhagavan Ramanujacharya is my fervent prayer, the prayer of one of his humble and unworthy disciples and followers.

SRI SANKARA'S TEMPLE.

The last magha shukla thrivodasi which corresponded with the twenty first day of February 1910 has become an important day in the calendar of Hindus. On that day the temple that had been built in memory of Sri Sankaracharya was consecrated by His Holiness the Sringagiri Swami. At Kaladi on the banks of the Purna in Travancore the great Sankaracharya was born, but no memorial of any kind existed at that place until Mr. Justice Ramachandrier determined to found one and started work. With the help of His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore and the cooperation of Mr. V. P. Madhava Row, ex-minister of that state, the memorial has become an accomplished fact. Two temples have been constructed, in one of which the image of Sri Sankara has been installed and in the other that of Sri Sarada, the *ishta* of the great acharya's family. The two were consecrated by His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya of Sringagiri. The important event attracted scholars from all communities and from all parts of India; and to-day Kaladi is a place of pilgrimage. In a part of India rich in natural scenery, in the dominions of a ruler famed for charity, in a place which tradition has clothed with sanctity as the birth place of the great Paramahamsa, there has sprung up a temple. Is it too much to hope that around it will soon grow an agraharm, a *patashala* and *gurukula* institution,—in other words a university of purely Indian type,—to remind the nation that the threads of progress will slip out of our hands if we lose sight of the grand advaitic idea.

In one sense the birth of Sankara was the beginning of modern India. Buddhism had introduced into the

land new ethic elements which complicated the social problem and obscured the grand truths of the Aryan religion. The country required the revival of the Vedic truths and Sankara was born. He touched the national chord, and the nation awoke. His sannyasa was the promise of a growth and expansion of Indian thought, which passing through the age of Bhakti emphasised by the great acharya Ramanuja and the other vaishnava saints, and through the rekindled fire of renunciation of the "Tyagis" of Northern India grew in volume and power in Sri Ramakrishna and his disciple Vivekananda.

From the time of Sankara the course of thought has been one of continuous advance. Absorption of new ideas and adaptation to meet new conditions have been going on. For centuries India has been working at the synthesis of thought and life which Sankara outlined in his life's work. The task of working out this synthesis is not now less arduous or less severe on account of the achievements of our Saints and teachers after Sankara. By them the path has been traced and it is for us now to widen it and so let all the nations of the world go along the broadway to the common goal. We take it that it is not the Murti of Sankara but the spirit of Sankara that has come to remind us of our duties, to watch over us and to guide us. Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao observed. "To those who have been watching the trend of events in India at the present time, this celebration, has a significance much beyond the passing interest of the moment. The event is symbolical to them of the Unity and Peace that is in insight for India and its multifarious races and religions in all departments of activity......" The unity and peace that is in sight must be one based on right knowledge. It must be the externalization by everyone of the Unity and Peace of Self in him. This right know-

ledge it is given to one in a million to attain without labour and training. And it is in the fitness of things that the memorial of Sankara at Kaladi should be a spot whence the power which Sankara manifested should again emanate and spread throughout the land. A well endowed oriental university with a library,—where the Vedas and the Vedangas may be studied, and periodical conferences to discuss and record the results of oriental research,—these must necessarily follow in the wake of this revival. It was encouraging to note that the leading Hindu astronomers from the different parts of India met in conference there to discuss and come to some common understanding about the reform of the Hindu Calendar or *Panchangam*. We trust Mr. Ramachandra Aivar having began and achieved success so far will feel encouraged to crown his labours by the establishment of this University. The action of the Ubhaya Vedanta Vardhani Sabha of Melkote, in sending representatives and in presenting an address to His Holiness the Sringagiri Swami must convince those who have not rightly understood India that the existence of so many sects in India does not conflict with the idea of Hinduism as a religion common to all Hindus. The Hindu has always felt that there is a unity underlying all the varying sects and that it is this unity that is more important to him than the differences between them. Every rise of new sects indicates an attempt made to correct some insidious corruption, to remove some weakening idea and to assimilate some new ideal. But the essential unity of all sects which Sri Sankara emphasised, and strengthened at a crisis in our national history and which secured the synthesis of Indian thought and feeling at that time, was never totally lost sight of in our history.

Whenever foreign and adharmic influences entered into the thoughts of the Hindu and diverted his attention from

growing synthesis and unity to minor details, the people have been promised the birth of great men to proclaim in trumpet voice the great truth "Ekam Sat Vipra Bahuda Vadanti." May we hope that His Holiness Sankaracharya of Sringagiri has the call to do this, that the building of a temple of Sankara is a step towards the fulfilment of the promise which the nation received in the glorious Sannyasa of Sri Sankara.

THE SWAMI AND HIS MISSION.

[*An address delivered by Mr. C. V. Kumaraswami Sastriar, B. A., B. L., Judge, City Civil Court, on the occasion of Birthday Anniversary Celebration of the Swami Vivekananda at Madras.*]

GENTLEMEN,

We have met to-day to commemorate the birthday of Swami Vivekananda; and I have been requested—I would rather say, commanded by His Holiness Swami Ramakrishnananda to deliver the usual address on the occasion. However much I wished that the task had devolved on abler shoulder I had no option but to obey, and I crave your indulgenec should you find that my efforts have not reached the high level of linguistic excellence and spiritual fervour which the speakers on previous occasions have taught you to expect. The subject on which I shall address you to-day is "The Swami and His Mission," and I chose the subject as it seemed to me that we cannot better commemorate his birthday than by trying to appreciate the greatness of the man and the nobility of his mission, to recall with reverence and gratitude the noble task which he set himself to perform, to appreciate noble truths which he taught with nobler reverence; and so far as it lies in our power to keep alive the memory of a life whose short span was consecrated to the ennobling of human suffering and pain, and the diffusion of the priceless gems of Indian thought and philosophy amongst the great nations of mankind. For when we come to think of that wonderful life we cannot but fail to be struck with the greatness of the man and the nobility of his mission and we cannot but hope that a knowledge of his life and a perusal of his discourses would animate the hearts and purify the lives of our countrymen present and future, and that no effort would be spared to keep the torch that he handed to us from being dimmed by indifference and neglect.

To the public his mission commenced when he left the shores of this country on the selfimposed duty of telling the West that the East was not perpetually dreaming but that it had a lesson to impart and a message to deliver that had hitherto been undreamt of, and that the solution of the riddles of existence, and the ills of society lay in the knowledge of the higher aspects of Vedanta. The previous years were spent in preparation and service, in the discipleship which it is necessary for every teacher to undergo for in the history of all religions no great teacher has arisen who has not spent his early years in service and suffering who has not spent years in purging his soul from the little dross that earthly existence invariably generates.

The comparatively unknown monk who left the shores, returned in the course of a few years the acknowledged master of thousands of earnest and thoughtful men; and the few years of the earthly existence which were still left to him were spent in the service of his motherland which he loved so well and to regenerate which was the task of his life.

It is impossible to appreciate the mission of the Swami or the task which he accomplished without looking back on the broad lines of religious thought and philosophy from the time the conquering Aryans hymned their joy of life and ideas of a future, to the period when after ages of stagnation they bewailed the futility of earthly joys and aspirations and the curse of mudane existence. Centuries elapsed between the two periods but the transition was none the less certain and none the less sure.

In the infancy of the Aryan race, when it was strong with the strength of youth and lust of conquest, when it found shelter in the sunny land of India and had to conserve all its energy to retain possession of the land conquered, pessimism found no place in its creed, and fervid thanks to the gods for benifits conferred and pious appeals for the continuation of the protection hitherto granted satisfied the religious cravings

conquest, the unsatiable craving of the Aryans for spiritual thought found vent in elaborate ceremonials and sacrifices, and as man was pleased with gifts and good things in this world ; it was thought that the God in whose image man had been created would be similarly propitiated. Centuries elapsed and when the Aryan settlers increased and multiplied and were comparatively free from foreign aggression and internal revolt of the conquered aboriginxies, the gifted race applied itself to the solution of the riddle of evistence embodied in the three questions "Whence, Wherefore and Whether?" and the Upanishads are the imperishable legacy bequeathed by them to human thought, where the riddle is attempted to be solved and is solved with marvellous aprroximation.

But the seeds of pessimism had been sown in the attempt. For when the brief span of man's years and the weak results of his achievements were measured against the infinity of space and the enternity of time it was found that the desire of wordly good and advancement, and the transient happiness which man got along with the great misery and trouble were of very little avail. Men whose names were on the lips of their contemporaries were soon forgotten and works which had been the delight of those who beheld them, soon crumbled into dust, and the ceaseless whirl of the wheel of existence only left clouds of the dust of oblivion.

This idea was developed for centuries and its ultimate expression in Buddhism which is the *cri de cœur* of pessimism, if by pessimism is meant the sense of the futility of striving after mundane joys or possessions or seeking for mundane greatness. All transient existence, Buddha taught, involved suffering, birth and death, growth and decay, the frustration of desire and the longing that cannot be satisfied. Regret and desire are equally vain in this world of impermanancy, for all joy is but the beginning of an experience that must have its pain—for all that live must surely die, and all that meet will surely part. Against happiness has to be set off sorrow and of the race. When, however, success had situated the joys of

the final balancement of accounts is in no way in favour of the former.

The triumph of Hinduism over Buddhism by no means meant the rejection of these doctrines but only a modification on What I would call a Theistic basis. The Indo-Aryans, too early in their career, sought the inward meaning and the reverse side of glory and saw the world behind the ordinary world of human striving, and this ideal haunted them with a persistency that in course of time became a serious hindrance to continued effort aud unbroken empire.

During the centuries of stagnation which followed the Mahommedan conquest the gloom was deepened and the doctrines of Karma which in the hands of philosophers afforded the key to unlock the secrets of existence, sorrow and suffering, became in the hands of fools and cowards the excuse for inaction. The rituals which were devised by the ancients as the means by which man might attune himself with the infinite and seek the light with unclouded vision, became to be considered as the ultimate end of endeavour. When the human mind stagnates it seeks to comfort itself with the idea that the quintessence of wisdom and good lies in the past, that slavish obedience is the only way to salvation and that any progress or modification of ancient ideas is the surest way to degradation. The caste-mark begins to eat up the forehead and religion comes to mean not the striving after high ideals or the recognition of great truths but the following of rituals and the meaningless observance of customs which have lost all fitness with the daily necessities of life. One man comes to be considered more religious than another not because he sins less but because he cants more.

It was to remedy these abuses that had crept into Hindusim, to uplift his countrymen, to induce them to take a saner and more wholesome view of life that the Swami Vivekananda devoted the years of his existence. That was his mission, and every word of his is a solemn protest against

the doctrines which had reduced human endeavours. To tell man that religion never intended that he should look away from this world and cheer himself with the thoughts of the next, and consider that he is earning heaven by making a hell of earth, but that he should look stoutly into this world in faith that if he does his work thoroughly here he would be carrying on the divine purpose of creation—that his greatest duty is to promote the happiness of his fellow-men, and that this duty cannot be accomplished by winning over the supposed degradation of earthly pursuits,—to teach him that he is not the lost or degraded being whom later day pessimism has depicted in such woeful colour, but an atom co-equal and co-eternal with the Supreme Spirit and that the kingdom of God is, in the truest sense of the word withim each individual, ready for the salvation not only of himself but the whole species, was what the Swami set himself to teach in language glowing with eloquence.

He recognised that every humam Soul like a seed in its germination represented the *apparent* duality of the universe. It strikes root downward into unconscious matter from which it derives its means of growth and its own separate standing place in creation. But it also strives upward into maturity and perfection. His mission was to teach it to realise its own law consciously and intelligently and to enable it to surmount the opposing powers around,—to depend more and more upon the light and warmth of heaven, less and less upon the light and manure and moisture of earth. To accomplish his mission the Swami used the means which the priceless teaching of the Vedanta Philosophy placed in his hands. In the words of Tennyson he recognised that self-knowledge self-reverence and self-control were the only means by which man might rise to sovereign power. The Monistic view of the Vedanta which taught that individual souls were only emanations from the Supreme One was emphasised by him to show that man was never intended to be weak or to suffer but was possessed of infinite capacity for improvement, " The

greatest sin" says the Swami in his Insplred Talks "is to think yourself weak. Nothing is greater. Realise you are Brahman. Nothing has power except what you give it. We are beyond the sun, the stars, the universe. Teach the God-head of Man. Stand up and say I am the Master—the Master of all." The whole of his teaching is but the amplefication of this idea—this sense of the divine nature of man of man's origin—this determination to treat evil as foreign to his nature and the result of ignorance and delusion. He taught that individuals were only partial detachments from the infinite ocean of being, that education of mankind to the realisation of the divine nature of the individual soul, and the recognition of the eternal oneness of the two back through our everlasting past and through an everlasting future was the only means of elevating mankind. "I direct my attention" said the Swami to an interviewer in London "to the individual, to make him strong, to teach him that he himself is divine and I call upon men to make themselves conscious of this divinity within. That is really the ideal—conscious or unconscious—of every religion." He recognised that a social system which raised up barriers of classes and sub-classes, each considering that the other was separate from its neighbour was a fatal bar to national development—that no social system that taught that the quintessence of virtue and goodness of virtue and goodness lay in minute observance of form and ceremonial could develop the unity of the race or promote united endeavour for its high being. "Give up" he says with scathing irony "all those old discussions, old fights, about things which are meaningless, nonsensical in their very nature. Think of the last six hundred or seven hundred years of degradation, when grown up men by hundreds have been discussing for years, whether we should drink a glass of water with the right had or the left, whether the hand should be washed three times or four times and whether we should gargle five or six times. * * There is a danger ot our religion getting into the kitchen. We are neither Vedantists most of us now, nor

Pouraniks, nor Tantriks. We are Don't-touchists. Our religion is the kitchen. Our God is the cooking-pot and religion is 'don't touch me, I am holy.' It is a sure sign of the softening of the brain when the mind cannot grasp the higher problems of life; all congruity is lost, the mind has lost all its strength, its activity and power of thought, and just tries to go round and round the smallest curve it can find."

All his teaching is but the Kalidoscopic reiteration of these ideas. He recognised that progress was not possible until his countrymen understood their divine nature and till they deliberately set before themselves the task of removing all the foreing matter which had clothed itself with the cloak of sanctity and masqueraded under the name of religion. He has taught renunciation, but it was the renunciation of the pleasures that minister to the lower self and of the desires that tend to affirm it to live in it and to rest on it. He too taught the use of suffering but it was the suffering out of which comes the serious mind, the grateful heart and undemanded devotion to the interests of the human race. He taught that the true road to progress lay not in an acknowledgment of our weakness but in an avowal of our strength and that man's primary duty was the chastisement of his passions, the discipline of his intellect, the subjugation of his will and the cultivation of the spirit of veneration for the good, and sympathy for the weak.

It is remarkable to see what a large space the vast submerged classes in India occupied in his mind and how earnest were his exhortations to his countrymen to do all they could to lift them up from their present state of degradation. "How many men," he asks in one of his letters "unselfish thoroughgoing men in Madras ready now to supply to struggle unto life and death to bring about a new state of things—sympathy for the poor, and bread to their hungry mouths—enlightenment to the poeple at large, and struggle unto death to men of them who have been brought to the level of beasts by the tyranny of your forefathers." "Remember". But alas!

nobody did anything for them. The fate of nations depend on the condition of the masses. Can you raise them? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature? Can you become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom work and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts. This is to be done and we will do it. You are born to do it. Have faith in yourselves, great convictions are mothers of great deeds. Onward for ever, Sympathy for the masses, the poor, the downtrodden, even unto death—this is our motto."

Gentlemen, I am afraid I have already made too great a demand on your patience. I have tried to give you what I take to be his ideals and the mission he set himself to accomplish, and when we see the earnest band of Sannyasins who have set themselves to the task of realising those ideals and the earnest and increasimg number of men who are striving to appreciate them, I do not think there could be any ground for supposing that the Swami taught or laboured in vain.

To thoughtful minds the necessity for great teachers like Swami Vivekanada and earnest and devoted disciples cannot be overrated. For we are living in an age when the pernicious doctrine of Western materialism is assuming a strange fascination for ordinary minds. Also the danger of our becoming dead to all higher aims and ambitions in the free pursuit of wealth and power is not small, as it will eventually lead us to forget God in the midst of all comforts of life. The only safeguard against this is the study of the works of our great teachers and who can say that in this respect there is a dearth of material. Looking back on the moral and religious history of this great country we cannot but be struck with the great religious teachers and thinkers that have from time to time arisen to prevent corruption and decay and to recall us to the path of true life. We cannot but think with gratitude and reverence on the great men who with no thoughts of self have set themselves to the redemption of their fellow-countrymen

and who have devoted the years of their lives to the betterment of their motherland. How many lives have been consumed that her children might be happy—how many minds have thought and agonised and how many lips have prayed that her children might be blessed—how many hearts have acted that the pulse of her chlldren might vibrate with joy,—how many eyes have been wet with tears that her children might see through the material shapes of this world as through a thin veil and hear through its ugly and discordant voices the everlasting song. Their voice is a plea sometimes tranquil, sometimes passionate but always earnest for the things of enduring exellence and for the regulation of our lives on lines fraught with the greatest good both to ourselves and to those with whom our lot is cast. They have lived and passed away leaving to us the glorious legacy of their imperishable teachings and it is impossible that their voice could cease to be heard.

> " Full lasting is the song, thought he
> The singer passes, lasting too
> For souls not lost in usury
> The rapture of the forward view."

Let us hope that the time would never come when in the aggression of noisier ambitions we can be so deadened to all better feelings as to be deaf to the voices that God has tuned and the lamps that he has lit for our guidance.

THE FORTY-EIGHTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

The Ramakrishna Home, Madras.

IN the morning there was Bhajana, in which Swami Ramakrishnananda took a leading part. This was followed by the feeding of about 4000 poor people. Many of the leading gentlemen contributed to the feeding fund. The Swami's students themselves, many of them graduates, served food to the poor.

In the evening there was a discourse on "The Swami and his Mission" by Mr. C. V. Kumaraswami Sastriar, Judge of the City Civil Court. Then Hon' ble Justice Krishnaswami Aiyar, the chairman, after thanking the lecturer for his eloquent discourse spoke to the following effect:—

Swami and Gentlemen,—I believe it is about 8 years since Swami Vivekananda passed away from amongst us. Eight times I think we have met in annual celebration of the anniversary of the departed great, and have listened year after year to eloquent discourses and presidential addresses. I myself remember having taken a humble part in some of these annual gatherings. But as I look over the past 8 years a feeling comes upon me, a question arises within me, what is the lesson that we have learnt from the life of Swami Vivekananda? What is the good that we have been able to do in our time following the teachings of the great Swami? It is perhaps not possible in the course of an evening's discourse to give you an idea of the great length over which the mind of Swami Vivekananda travelled, to give you an idea of

the vastness of the subjects with which he dealt in the discourses that he delivered in this country and in foreign lands. But it is not perhaps impossible to summarise in a few words some of the salient ideas which he was never tired of repeating in one form or another in the letters that he wrote, in the addersses that he delivered, and in the books that he composed. One idea which was prominent in his mind and which the degeneracy of the present age forced itself upon him and which if it was possible for him he would with all his might have seen implanted in the breast of every Indian, was the idea of strength. He used often to speak of strength and insisted on every individual Indian in this land to have the feeling that he was not a weakling, that he was not a downtrodden individual. He was anxious that every one, be he a Brahman or a Sudra, be he within the pale of caste or outside it, should realise that he was not merely a creature of God, but that he was God himself, that he had within himself the attributes of the divine. He felt that it was the lack of recognition of this great and sublime truth on the part of every one of us that made us weaklings in these latter degenerate days.

There was another idea which you will find prominently repeated again in one form or another in all his discourses and that idea was the universality of the Hindu religion. Every religion has had its days of sectarianism and of narrowness, of salvation for the elect and glory only to the few. As every religion has begun to find a larger expression of its own inmost truths, every religion has begun to see the universal elements of its own features in order that it may furnish a broader platform on which people of varied faiths may meet. Now in that conception of universality, the Hindu religion, of all the religions of the world, has never had to borrow from

any other. Its conception has been one of universality, because there was no particular cult, there was no particular form that was necessary for any person to adopt in order that he may realise the Supreme within himself. Hinduism proclaimed as it has been in the Gita, "No matter what God one worships or in what form one comes to Me, all the gods that any person may, according to his lights, worship will be fashioned into the Supreme." This idea Swami Vivekananda has brought into the marketplace and has popularised amongst all classes from the highest to the lowest. He has told us that the great cardinal diviiions of Hinduism at the present day are not mutually antagonistic, that one is not superior to the other, but all these forms are complimentary, that each is suited to the particular class of intellect and of character, and each therefore subserves its purpose for the uplifting of the human soul.

It is not necessary foı me to go into the other positions that he has taken up and brought before us with that incisive rhetoric and logic which was peculiarly his own. But having considered the way in which he did his work, the question arises whether after his passing away, have we shown ourselves worthy of those teachings, have we on our part indicated a disposition to profit by the lessons that he gave us? I well remember that on his returning from the West he was addresssing large Madras audiences in which he tried to place before them his conception of the work that lay before the young men of this country. I remember his saying in one of the great addresses that he delivered on the "Future before us," how he would regulate Indian Society, so that Indian Society might move on lines calculated to produce the greatest possible benefit to the people of his land. He said that he would start institution by hundreds all over the country, and

he would have these institutions send forth from within their walls hundreds of men imbued with the best knowledge of the Hindu religion. He would have them go forth to all people without distiction of caste, go among the highest and the lowest and preach the sublime truth of the Hindu religion which he felt the world was waiting to assimilate. He said he would found a temple in Madras which should be a place of training of Sannyasins, not by tens but by hundreds, who would imbibe the highest truths of religions from the teaching given in the institution and would go forth from the temple not merely to give religious instructions where it was needed but also to provide secular instruction amongt all the ranks of society. He said that the highest religion should be brought to the doors of every Indian whatever his station in life. Now, is it not a question for us to ask ?" Have we after his passing away felt that it is a serious burden upon the lives of every one of us that he tried to place, in order that we according to the measure of our abilities might carry that burden ? Have we satisfied our own consciences and our people that we have securely carried it to the places destined for them? No. The Swami would often exclaim "We want men. Where are the men ? Let them come forward by tens and hundreds. There is work of untold magnitude, work in every possible direction. But where are they ?" And if it had pleased God that Swami Vivekananda should be with us for a longer time, I am certain that the work which he outlined in his addresses would have been at least carried to a measurable degree, so that others might feel that the burden had been lightened for them. But the will of Providence was otherwise. The Swami has laid the duty upon us. It is our duty to show ourselves worthy of the teaching that we received.

Swami Vivekananda wanted men for work in a hundred directions, work in the name of God without reference to the fruit, work with a singleness of purpose and with a solemn sense of duty that the work ordained must be done whatever the sacrifice. Taking the vast humanity of India, one half of it is groaning under burdens untold. And what have we done to lighten their burden? Female education stand where it did twenty, thirty, perhaps fifty years ago. The problem of female education has really yet to be solved. Until the Hindu parents, men and women, devote themselves to the education of their girls not as a mere pastime but as a serious business of their lives, that problem will continue to remain unsolved. Then take the great problem of early marriage. Have we done anyting in that direction? It is often regarded as a mere question of health of the girl. It is often regarded as a question of the proper age of conjugal felicity. But the problem is deeper than that. It is a question as to whether the Indian nation is to continue to live as a nation or is to perish. It is within everyone's experience, and the ordinary principles of Biology also teach us, that the offspring of creature before they attain their maturity is necessarily a weakling offspring. If this weak offspring continues to propagate itself in the course of the succeeding generation, what would be the result? You find Indians of great promise, of brilliant intellect and of great power passing away at forty, or fifty without having really done their lives' work. If you compare the Indians with any European nation, you will note the difference, you will mark the average longevity of a European. You will find that for every Indian who lives 15 years of active work capable of fruition there is a European who lives four times that period. Is it wrong for us to say that the prospects of the European

races are many times greater than the prospects of the Indians? Pass on to the condition of widows, a problem which is likely to be considerably solved if the age of marriage of girls be raised. The life of austerity which widows are required to lead, the penances which they perform were all intended to train them to a life corresponding to the life of a Sannyasin amongst men. It was intended not merely to purify their lives but also to impart to others the benefit of their religious and moral culture. But what do you find now? The condition of widows is one of ignorance. Therefore they are not serviceable in that larger sense to the rest of the womankind. Each and every one of you should take it to your heart.

There is a larger population of the depressed classes in India to whom reference was made, by my friend the lecturer. The depressed classes, according to one of the accounts which I was examining to-day, are estimated at fifty millions. Fifty millions of people are uncared for, are outside the gates of the temples, with no prospect of the higher religion ever permeating their ranks, with little or no education whatever to improve their moral or physical condition. One-sixth of the population of this land! What is the work that we have done amongst them? Have any of you asked yourself, whether that work has been most sought for and most successfully accomplished? I do not know whether any of you have realised the great healing work that is done in Hardwar and Benares. A handful of Sannyasins with earnestness of soul, with thorough self-abnegation, with a determination to do and die are working in those places for the benefit of their countrymen. It is a glorious sight to see. I have seen with my own eyes medicines administered, and bandages made, with tender womanly care and with

marvellous patience. That kind of work should be done by the people of this part of the country. Swami Vivekananda hoped great things from this Presidency He thought that the Hindu faith was preserved in this part of the country with greater purity than perhaps in other places, owing to foreign invasion and admixture of alien elements which had crept into those parts. I must confess if Swami Vivekananda had been amongst us he would be sadly disappointed ; for since he passed away there is not one seen in this part of the country ready to take up that particular work. How many of you condemn the notion of regarding the depresed classes as untouchables? How many of you have solved the problem as to the hand that handles the glass of water, whether it should be the right or left? Away from all this, there remains the fact that these, are not the essence of the Hindu religion.

Pass on from this to the great working classes, namely, the industrial and the artisan classes which languish owing to the import of cheap foreign goods. They are obliged to give up their hereditary occupations. What have we done to enable these classes to arrive at a better adjustment of their condition and derive from this life whatever happiness it is possible for man to have?

As I told you, a handful of Sannyasins are labouring hard and striving with all their might and main against odds too great for them, odds which it is impossible for them to overcome, Is it not time for us to feel that after all these years we must make some endeavour to put our shoulders to the wheel, to take the task upon our shoulders and each realise that he has done something according to his neighbours, to improve the physical comforts of his friends and countrymen and to live spiritually in every sphere of life, so

that he may lay down his life at the end of the journey full of contentment? Is it not for us to act in that spirit, is it not for us when we go home every day to put ourselves the question, what have we done to-day to mitigate the sufferings of our countrymen, to deserve well of the country that gave us birth? Is it enough for us to feel pride in the thought that this land was great at some distant date and it may one day be great by the conjunction of events that we know not of? If the country was great, we are responsible now for bringing that greatness down to the present level of degeneracy that we all feel. Is it not for us to show that we will not go away from meetings of this description gathered together for the purpose of commemorating Swami Vivekananda's services, without taking a resolve within ourselves that we may have some record of unselfish work for others, when we pass away from this life? There can only be one answer to these questions. God grant that we may receive the spiritual influence sufficient for this purpose.

Mr. G. A. Natesan on behalf of Swami Ramakrishnananda proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer and the Chairman. In doing so he refered to the keen interest the Chairman had been taking in associations of this kind.

The proceedings of the day terminated with Aratikam and distribution of Prasada.

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THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH, BELUR.

The Thithi puja day was celebrated as usual. The Swamiji with his brother sannyasins and others held silent worship and meditation as almost the whole day.

On the following Sunday the 6th Feb. the public celebration took place in a grand and rejoicing style.

There was a large gathering of people from various places. In the morning Scriptures were read and explained. In the Temple room stood the big picture of Swamiji beautifully decorated, which gave a very pleasing sensation to look at. There was a lecture by a gentleman on Swamiji, his life and Teaching. The feeding of the poor was admirable. About 4000 poor were fed with great attention.

The Vedanta Society of Bangalore issued a large number of invitations to celebrate the forty-eighth anniversary of the birthday of the late Swami Vivekanandaji. The programme occupied the whole day, from 8 a. m. to 8-30 p.m. At 8 a.m. there was a large gathering of Hindus at the C. V. Sabha School, on Cavalry Road, where several *bhajana* parties had assembled ; a procession was formed about 10 a.m. and went through the main streets of the Cantonment, the members of the *bhajana* being treated to refreshments by several religious societies on their way through the Station. From 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. about 1,000 poor people were fed in the compound of the Sabha School, the distribution being well-managed and the crowd kept orderly by the students of R. B. Arcot Narainsawmy Mudaliar's Technical School. In the afternoon, there was another large gathering of Indians at R. B. A. N. Mudaliar's High School, who were treated to some music by the professional flutist, Mr. Narrainswamy, who was accompanied by a violinist.

Punctually at 6 p. m. Mr. J. S. Chakravarti, M. A., Comptroller and Financial Secretary to the Government of Mysore, took the Chair and was supported by the following Swamijies on the dais:—Swamis Nirmalananda, Samanda and Vishudhananda of the Ramakrishna

Mission and swamis Vishuda Bikku and Ananda Bikku of the Budhist Society.

Mr. R. A. Krishnamachar, B.A., an earnest Vedantist and a disciple of the late Swami Vivekananda, delivered an interesting lecture on the Swami's work based on his personal experience.

Mr. K. H. Ramaiyya, B.A., an ardent admirer of Vedantism, next gave an address in Kanarese on the sayings of the Swami.

Mr. G. Varadachar, B.A , B.L., was the next speaker and he enlightened the audience on the "Thoughts of the great Swami."

Mr. Ganapathy Naicker, a learned Tamil Pandit, recited some Tamil verses, specially composed by him for the occasion, in praise of the Swami.

The Chairman then rose and delivered an impressive address.

The proceedings terminated at 8-30 p. m. the Chairman being garlanded before he left.

At the Ramakrishna Home, Bangalore.

The birthday anniversary was celebrated in a befitting manner. On the Tithipuja day more than 150 gentlemen joind in the Sankirtan and partook of Prasada; on the following Sunday, there was a procession with a Sankirtan party going round the city; at noon nearly 2000 poor were served with food; Mr. J. Chakravarti, Comptroller, Government of Mysore, gave an eloquent address to a large audience on "The Work of the Teachers," The proceedings terminated with Aratikam and distribution of Prasada.

At the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Benares.

The Tithipuja day was observed with special Puja, Bhoga, chanting of the Scripture and Homa &c. On the next Sunday there were readings from the scripture, feeding of the poor, and music, etc.

The Vivekananda Society, Colombo.

The Birthday Anniversary of Srimat Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with much *eclat* on Sunday, the 6th instant. The hall was tastefully decorated with ferns, &c., and presented a very gay appearance. An unusually large number of members and wellwishers gathered together and thronged the hall to pay their homage and honour to the memory of the great Patriot-Sage. Proceedings began shortly after 5-30 p. m. with the singing of Devaram and the chanting of the Vedas. Mudaliyar R. C. Kailasapillai, Vice-President, who presided over the function and conducted the proceedings and to whose unostentatious efforts a large measure of the Society's progress may be attributed, delivered a most impressive address in which he dwelt at length upon the good and great qualities of the Swami, and his message of peace to the world in general and to the sons of India in particular, and laid much stress upon the Swami's spirit of toleration. He appealed to the members to work heart and soul for the dissemination of the ideals and teachings of the great sage with untiring and unselfish efforts. He also read a telegram just then received from the Baticaloa Vivekananda Society. Then followed readings from the Shastras, a selection from the English translation of the Swetaswatara Upanishad and one from the Dravida Maha Bashya, and a recitaion in English, piece selected being a piece of "Advice to mortals." The Sanskrit slokas of Sivagnanabotham from the Rourava Agama, which formed the basis of the tamil Sivagnanabotham of Sri Meikanda

Devar, were also recited by one of the members. Mr. A Talaivasingam, Advocate, who was to deliver a lecture on the "Life and teachings" of the Swami not being able to do so owing to a sad bereavement in his family, Mr. R. S. Subramaniam filled his place, and filled it worthily too, and gave the audience a treat as it were, expatiating on how the followers of the Swami should emulate his example and become real workers in the cause of humanity. He quoted from a communication he received from Swami Narayana and impressed upon his hearers of the importance of the virtue of self-reliance and exhorted them to continue in the good work. The lecturer occupied about half an hour during which he kept the audience spell bound. He concluded with a call on the members to devote their spare time and energy in bringing the Society to a firm and solid footing, appealed to the audience on the necessity of a home for the Society and said that the necessary funds will be readily forthcoming if the members would only set to work at it. At intervals there was the chanting of the Tamil Vedam to the accompaniment of music which added to enliven the proceedings. By about 8 p.m., the proceedings came to a close, and, with the distribution of pansupari and santanam and the sprinkling of rose-water, the assembly dispersed, after having spent a very pleasant evening.

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NOTES AND THOUGHTS

Buddha's relics—We have once before drawn attention to the doubt expressed in certain quarters to the relics being those of historic Buddha whatever may be the truth about the matter, we are compelled to make these remarks on the action of the Government of India in handing over the casket or Buddha's relics to Buddhist representatives from Burmah to be enshrined at Mandalay. It is a precious gift to the Buddhists of Burma and will be a constant reminder to them and their religionists of their spiritual kinship with Hindus. Among the places in India sacred to every Buddhist in the world, Peshawar has become one. Mother India has carefully preserved this sacred treasure and yielded it up now, even as she has preserved the Sanatana Dharma. However anxious the Buddhist Kingdoms and Communities of other parts of the world might have been to get the relics for themselves, they would certainly not have opposed the proposal to keep it in a place hallowed by the feet of Lord Buddha. But the Government of India did not support a proposal agreeable to the sentiments of Indians. The special attention and regard shown to Burmese India by this gift is no grievance to the Hindu whose habit of mind is too good in everything. All the same there exists a feeling that in this matter the Government disregarded an expressed desire of the Indian nation to show their reverence to a great historic personality, to the greatest Karmayogin the world has ever seen. Indians can still do one thing ; they can erect a monument at the spot where the relics were found and thus add a physical proof to the historic continuity of their civilisation.